

REMARKS

The application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated May 9, 2005. Claims 1-10 and 12-19 were pending, with claims 2, 9 and 10 having been withdrawn by the Patent Office from consideration. Claim 11 was previously canceled, without prejudice or disclaimer. By this Amendment, claims 12, 13, 15 and 18 have been canceled, without prejudice or disclaimer, new dependent claims 20-25 have been added, and claims 1, 3 and 17 have been amended to clarify the claimed invention. Accordingly, claims 1-10, 14, 16, 17 and 19-25 are now pending, with claims 1 and 17 being in independent form.

Claim 3 was objected to as being dependent from claim 1 or claim 2. Claim 12 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, as purportedly failing to comply with the written description requirement.

By this Amendment, claim 3 has been amended to depend from claim 1 only, and claim 12 has been canceled.

Claims 1, 7, 8 and 13-17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as purportedly anticipated by Japanese Patent Application No. JP 10-329445 (Mori). Claim 3 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Mori in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,981,746 to Matsuo et al. Claims 4 and 5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Mori. Claim 6 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Mori in view of Japanese Patent Application No. JP 6-135172 (Kobayashi). Claims 12, 18 and 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Mori in view of Japanese Patent Application No. JP 8-332785 (Tanaka).

Applicant has carefully considered the Examiner's comments and the cited art, and respectfully submits that independent claims 1 and 17 are patentable over the cited art, for at least the following reasons.

This application is directed to a heat sensitive stencil sheet which has a porous resin layer provided on one side of a thermoplastic resin film, and a porous fiber layer bonded by an adhesive to the surface of the porous resin layer. The porous resin layer includes a multiplicity of walls and ceilings which define cells, and the cell ceilings are bonded to the porous fiber layer by the adhesive (see, for example, Fig. 1 and corresponding description at page 5, lines 19-22). The adhesive is appropriately selected to provide a desired bonding between the porous fiber layer and the porous resin layer to maintain no peeling-off during the printing action, and at the same time not interrupt the porosity of (and interfere with flow of ink through) the pores of the porous resin layer.

Mori, as understood by Applicant, is directed to a heat-sensitive stencil sheet which comprises a thermosensitive film, a porous resin layer and a porous fiber layer disposed in this order (Fig. 5).

However, Applicant does not find teaching or suggestion in Mori that the porous resin layer includes a multiplicity of walls and ceilings which define cells, and the cell ceilings are bonded to the porous fiber layer by an adhesive, as provided by the claimed invention of independent claims 1 and 17 as amended, nor various other features of the adhesive, such as recited in claims 3 and 20-25.

Matsuo, as understood by Applicant, is directed to a heat sensitive stencil sheet consisting of a thermoplastic film and a porous support. Matsuo was cited in the Office Action as disclosing use of an ionizing radiation-curable type adhesive.

However, Matsuo does not disclose use of an appropriate adhesive to bond a porous fiber layer to the surface of the porous resin layer, nor that the porous resin layer includes a multiplicity of walls and ceilings which define cells, and the cell ceilings are bonded to the porous fiber layer by an adhesive, as provided by the claimed invention of independent claims 1 and 17 as

amended.

Kobayashi, as understood by Applicant, is directed to a printing stencil paper structure including a porous base material on thermoplastic resin, with an inorganic foaming agent dispersed in the thermoplastic agent. Kobayashi was cited in the Office Action solely for the alleged disclosure of use of a foamy layer as a porous layer.

Tanaka, as understood by Applicant, is directed to a thermal stencil printing base sheet, wherein a wall-like film is provided on one surface of a thermoplastic resin film. Figure 3 of Tanaka was cited in the Office Action as disclosing a honeycomb shaped aggregate of cells in the wall-like film.

Applicant does not find disclosure or suggestion in Tanaka or the other cited art, however, of a heat sensitive stencil sheet which has a porous resin layer provided on one side of a thermoplastic resin film, and a porous fiber layer bonded by an adhesive to the surface of the porous resin layer, wherein the porous resin layer includes a multiplicity of walls and ceilings which define cells, and the cell ceilings are bonded to the porous fiber layer by an adhesive, as provided by the claimed invention of independent claims 1 and 17 as amended, as provided by independent claim 1 as amended.

In view of the amendments to the claims and remarks hereinabove, Applicant submits that the application is now in condition for allowance. Accordingly, Applicant earnestly solicits the allowance of the application.

If a petition for an extension of time is required to make this response timely, this paper should be considered to be such a petition. The Office is hereby authorized to charge any fees that may be required in connection with this response and to credit any overpayment to our Deposit Account No. 03-3125.

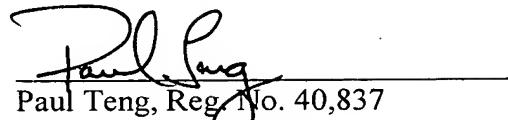
If a telephone interview could advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is

Hideyuki YAMAGUCHI, S.N. 10/075,481  
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respectfully requested to call the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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Paul Teng, Reg. No. 40,837  
Attorney for Applicant  
Cooper & Dunham LLP  
Tel.: (212) 278-0400